

We Lie If...

1 John 1:6 (New American Standard Bible)

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

1 John 2:4

The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

1 John 2:22-23

Who is the liar except the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.²³ Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.

Introduction

This morning, we will talk about things that make us a liar. Naturalism, hypocrisy, denial of Jesus Christ. They make us a liar.

Last Sunday, I briefly talked about the surge of naturalism in our culture. I mentioned that there's a clash between Christian faith and naturalism in our society. Naturalism denies the existence of God; therefore, it denies any supernatural moral codes such as the Ten Commandments. It also teaches that there's no absolute truth and everything is relative, meaning morality is up to individual's preference. E.g., A naturalist professor teaches the class that everything is relative and that there's no absolute truth. A student raises his hand asking, "Does it mean that what you just said is not an absolute truth, either?" The professor abruptly changed his statement saying, "There's no absolute truth except my statement that there's no absolute truth." The whole class burst into laughter.

Naturalism promotes inclusiveness in all areas of life, but it contradicts itself by being exclusive. Here's one example. Naturalists are proud to be tolerant with all beliefs and practices. However, when it comes down to Christian views, they are intolerant therewith accusing that the Christian beliefs are most intolerant and exclusive. However, if you flip the coin, didn't they just say that everything is relative, and all views are welcome. Why, then, can't they tolerate the Christian views as they

claim that all views are equally tolerable and acceptable? Like the professor in the story, they contradict themselves.

The Christian gospel seems the most exclusive idea to many, but it is the most inclusive message of salvation. God offers salvation to all. He invites all sinners with no exception. Salvation is by faith alone. Grace alone. Christ alone. No human merits are required. Some religious messages out there seem most inclusive, but they too are exclusive. E.g., Buddhism sounds very inclusive, but they too have a hell for those who reject their teaching (Hell of Burning Heat--Tapana--reserved for those who do not believe in Tapana) (p. 198, The Oxford Book of Death).

Folks, here's the bottom line: you cannot be a naturalist and a Christian at the same time. Why? Because naturalism flatly denies the existence of God. And we believe that He exists. Furthermore, to naturalists, Christ's death and resurrection is absurd and even foolish to believe. However, to us, Christ is God's power and wisdom in mystery. No human wisdom invented the gospel. No one can fully understand or explain its core message: God loves the world so that He sent His beloved Son to the cross to save humanity from their sin.

Well, naturalism makes us, believers, a liar and a fool. They say there's no God, we say there's God. They say it's evolution, we say it is God who created them all. They deny the absolute truth and don't believe in supernatural divine moral codes, and we do believe in the Ten Commandments and God's Word as absolute truth. We also believe in God's mysteries including Christ's birth, redemption, resurrection, His return, and final judgment.

Speaking of making us a liar, John the Apostle also talks about it in today's Scripture lessons.

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He addresses us, today's believers, regarding confession and practice. Even though we confess our faith in Jesus the Christ, unless we do certain things, he says, we make ourselves a liar. Since none of us wants to be a liar, let's pay attention to what he is saying.

1. **1 John 1:6** (New American Standard Bible):

If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

We can claim that we have fellowship with God; we can say that we walk in the light; we can claim that we know God and love Him; we also can claim that God knows us and loves us, and yet if we walk in the darkness, and if we do not practice the truth, we are liars.

A word comes to my mind. *Hypocrisy*. Believers can be hypocrites. You heard about that expression before. If we say things and do not practice what we say, people in the world judge us and call us hypocrites. E.g., Even in Jesus' time, there were people like that. Such people Jesus condemned very harshly. What was the problem? They were good at teaching others with God's Word, and yet they didn't put into practice what they taught. Jesus exposed such hypocrisy of the scribes and the Pharisees and warned the people to beware of their hypocrisy:

“Therefore, whatever they tell you, do and comply with it all, but do not do as they do; for they say things and do not do them” (Matthew 23:3).

Folks, let us beware of our own hypocrisy. Let us raise a genuine and honest question to ourselves, *“Do I keep God's ways as I preach and teach?”* This question is relevant to all believers, but especially to teachers and preachers.

2. 1 John 2:4

The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

If we claim that we know God personally, and yet fail to keep His commandments, we are liars. Hmm... by the way, how can we keep His commandments, unless we know them first what they are?

To refresh our memory, let's begin with the Ten Commandments (#1. You shall have no other gods before Me. #2. You shall not make for yourself an image to bow down to them or worship them. #3. You shall not use the name of the Lord in vain. #4. Keep the Sabbath holy. #5. Honor your parents. #6 - #10. You shall not murder, commit adultery, steal, give false testimony, or covet).

The first four commandments are concerning our relationship with the Lord, the fifth commandment is regarding our parents, and the rest 5 commandments are regarding our neighbors. There are other commandments as well such as *forgiving*,

loving, rejoicing, being thankful, praying, trusting in the Lord, meditating on God's Word, and so forth. Jesus sums up nicely all the Law and the Prophets with two kinds of love: the love of God and the love of neighbors. I am sure all of us want to do that.

The real question is this: *How much do we know God's commandments? How diligently do we educate ourselves with all these commandments of God and keep them? How much time do we spend to know God and to know His commandments?* Let's examine how we spend our time daily. The last thing we want to do is to waste our time on things trivial and transient. If we watch TV hours upon hours on news and entertainment stuff, and yet do not have time for God's Word and prayer, we are doing a great disservice to ourselves that will affect our eternal life later. Let's invest our time wisely to know God's commandments and keep them. That will keep us from becoming a liar. E.g., Spend 15 minutes a day, and finish the Bible in a year.

3. 1 John 2:22-23

Who is the liar except the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.²³ Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.

We are the liars if we deny Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, and the Son of God. John the Apostle further points out that those who deny the Father and the Son are antichrists. The truth is that we cannot separate the Father and the Son. They are together. They are one. *Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.*

Speaking of faith in Jesus as our Savior and Lord, we must thank God for the fact that you and I have no issue believing in Jesus from the first moment we heard about the gospel. I consider myself and many other believers truly blessed, because faith has been given to us as a free gift. Remember: not everyone has faith in Jesus Christ.

Why is faith so important? Because our eternal destiny and destination are determined by faith. Not by any human merits. Human goodness or achievements have no place in salvation. God doesn't require a Ph.D. to be saved. Neither does He ask for a million-dollar contribution to be considered in salvation. Anyone, male and female, old and young, rich and poor, can be saved by simple faith.

Here's the reality. Some folks refuse to believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Some of them are our own family members. Do we not wish and pray that the Lord remember them in salvation too? Then, it's time that we did our duty to let them know who Jesus Christ is. Thomas More, the 16th century thinker, well known to us as "the most famous victim of Henry VIII's tyranny" once wrote: *The things, good Lord, that we pray for, give us the grace to labor for* (UMH #409). If we pray for the salvation of our loved ones, let's pray for God's grace to labor for their salvation. May God grant us wisdom and courage to share the gospel with our loved ones. Let us tell them that through faith and through God's grace alone, not through their own goodness, they will be saved. Let us cry onto the Lord for their salvation. Every day. E.g. The prayer of Monica, the mother of St. Augustine, brought him to salvation.

Let me remind you how important Jesus is in salvation. God has made Him the way to the Father. Only Christ. No other way. He claims that "*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me*" (John 14:6). Dealing with His exclusive claim, I had two choices. Either I reject His claim as false, therefore, calling Him a liar, or accept His claim as truth, eternal truth, therefore, follow Him as my Savior and Lord. I made up my mind and chose Christ who says nothing but the truth. You too do the same. Do not stand in the middle. Do not sit on the fence. Choose today. Accept Him as your Savior and Lord.

Conclusion

Here's one more verse I didn't touch today, but it has the same message. *If someone says, "I love God," and yet he hates his brother or sister, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother and sister whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen* (1 John 4:20).

Do you believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you wish, pray, and believe that you will be in the presence of God forever? That's good, John the Apostle says. However, don't be a hypocrite or a liar, he warns.

How can we prevent that? Read the Bible. Meditate on God's Word to know the truth. Walk in God's ways and keep His commandments. Love your brothers and sisters as Christ has loved you. Do not be ashamed to declare Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life to the world. Then, we all will be true to God, to others, and to ourselves. Amen.